

PERSIAN RESPONSES

*Political and Cultural Interaction
with(in) the Achaemenid Empire*



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READING PERSEPOLIS IN GREEK: GIFTS OF THE YAUNA

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Introduction

This chapter is the first of two investigations in which I consider how a hypothetical upper-class Athenian citizen of the classical age would have responded to the program of Achaemenid art known from the Persian heartland capital at Persepolis. The focus here is on his reaction to the 'Greek' delegation of gift-bearers on the Apadana, a group whose unusual assortment of gifts has not received adequate scholarly comment. The second investigation examines his reading of the extended metaphor of the Apadana reliefs.¹ My procedure will be to interrogate the scene in terms of Achaemenid art and then to explore the ways in which an Athenian might have interpreted it according to his own world-view and perceptions of appropriateness.

My hypothetical Athenian's visit to Persepolis belongs in the long century from about 460 to right before 330, and I picture his reactions in terms of the culture of what conventional terminology calls the classical age. That is, of course, an artificial concept. To be sure, the Athenian socio-political landscape shifted greatly across these years. Nevertheless, there was sufficient broad uniformity of referential experience to validate the invention of a generic elite Athenian traveler – one who is not tied to a specific point of flux within the century and is not meant to be seen as micro-historically defined. The purpose of his invention in this way is to allow contemplation of broad issues in *cross-cultural* encounter with Persia that emerge from the experiment.

The visit comes after the Apadana was completed. The foundations were laid by 515 (Root 1986–7), and the sculptural program was designed during the reign of Darius (522–486), though work continued into that of Xerxes (486–465) (Root 1979, 86–95). There is therefore no question of our culturally-attuned classical Athenian influencing the formulation of Achaemenid art as we see it at Persepolis. That art was essentially a dynamic response to Egyptian and greater Mesopotamian traditions (Root 1979) and, although the current project raises the possibility that Darius' designers

considered the probable reception of the program *by then-contemporary Greeks*, the era of planning was simultaneous with the Greek archaic period – well before our hypothetical Athenian visited Persepolis. Stories told by a traveler such as ours upon his return home might have had an impact on Athenian art or literary production, but that topic (cf. Root 1985) is not explicitly discussed here

I select an *Athenian* visitor so that I can use Attic cultural production as my main point of reference without repeatedly justifying an assumption of access to this production and acquaintance specifically with Athenian cultural norms and social values.² This Athenian is a fully invested citizen; and essentially by definition he is thus a male.³ Although constructions of gender were not rigidly binary in classical Athens,⁴ I am portraying our visitor as a notional normative male, perforce without humanizing shades of personal experience and self-identification. *As* a male, our man could know not only the imagery of the masculine civic realm of his environment but also the imagery mainly visible on objects used by females in their domestic and ritual activities. The various corners of the Athenian household were not, after all, closed to the Athenian male in the way the outside world was largely closed to a good Athenian woman (Nevett 1999).

I will not rehearse the case for the *actual* presence of Athenians in Persepolis, though I think it very strong.⁵ The present exercise does, however, presuppose a willingness to suspend traditional views on the isolation of Persepolis – views that persist at least tacitly despite many efforts to shift them.⁶ There were also non-Persepolitan venues and mechanisms for Athenian encounter with the Apadana program,⁷ but I place our visitor on the imperial citadel at the heartland capital as a way of highlighting the performative agenda of a visual environment meant to engage a world of receivers.⁸

The Old Persian word *Yauna* (Ionian) connoted any and all Greeks, regardless of origin.⁹ The Achaemenids did acknowledge variations (texts allude to the varied locations of so-called *Yauna*) but the overriding feeling is of collectivity. Although none of the Apadana delegations is labeled, the force of scholarly argument strongly favors identifying Group XII as these *Yauna*; the group is best understood as depicting an idea that could in principle incorporate populations of mainland Greek states and all the colonial entities of the Greek diaspora as well as East Greece.¹⁰

The Achaemenid clustering of all Greeks under one rubric might seem a dismissive neutralization of the variety of Greek cultural and political experience. But we might also detect a wish to create unity in diversity out of the dispersed and varied realities of being *Yauna*. The theme of unity in diversity is important in the larger context of Achaemenid imperial construction (Root 1990) and seems also to be operative in a range of subsets of association

between specific peoples (e.g. Iranians) rendered on the Apadana.¹¹ This reductive attitude has a place in Greek thought too, since a sense of group identity based on common language did exist (in part fostered by contact and conflict with the Persian Empire) and could on occasion supersede the inter-state rivalries of Greek *Realpolitik* (Hall 1989, esp. 4–13). So, although the collective notion of Greekness appeared with different force among Persians and Greeks, the idea was foreign to neither. This will have affected our Athenian's reading of the Apadana according to the date and his attitude to panhellenism. He might bridle at being portrayed as 'just another Yauna' or the collective vision might reinforce his fluctuating sense of solidarity with all Yauna. Ambivalence of this sort appears in Herodotus¹² and can reasonably be thought part of the experience of the classical Athenian. But whatever the political circumstances of the moment, it is hard to imagine our Athenian being *uninterested* in how the Yauna were portrayed.

Especially *because* the Apadana delegate groups have no captions, they invite oral commentary – with visitors pointing out representations of peoples, musing about their intended identities and the meanings of their gifts. It is clear from Aeschylus' *Persians* that Athenians understood that Persians called all Greeks 'Ionians' (Hall 1989; Tuplin 1996, 134). Thus our Athenian visitor will have appreciated that he himself was (by projection) portrayed as part of the collective Yauna bearing gifts to the Persian king along with Greek peoples securely within imperial control at the time of his visit. Across the long century, this will have sparked varying responses. In what follows I aim to create an impressionistic sense of the range of possible reactions.

The Apadana

The official art of the Achaemenid kings addressed diverse viewers with messages that could be read against a varied cultural backdrop while retaining some overarching homogeneity of intended meaning. A key element was to convey an ideology of harmonious hegemony that dovetailed with the textual rhetoric of royal display inscriptions (Root 1990).

The Apadana is the most explicit and publicly accessible material expression of Achaemenid Persian imperial ideology at Persepolis. If its three great columned porticoes are taken into account, it covers the largest area of any edifice on the citadel; the platform upon which it sits (higher than that of any other building) and its lofty and variegated columns render it the most imposing structure in elevation; and the horizontal plan of public space makes the visitor approach its lavishly decorated north stairway across the large open courtyard that separates it from the Gate of All Lands.¹³

At two corners of the Apadana, foundation deposits include inscriptions engraved trilingually on silver and gold tablets. The words frame the empire

in terms of the lands at the far reaches of its four corners and the deposits thus make the corners of the actual structure an implicit allegory for the fixing of the corners of the empire achieved by assertive power. Up above, the reliefs extending across the stairway façades leading to the north and east porticoes represent the empire metaphorically in the form of a gift-giving procession. This ceremony embodies the result of the outward-directed conquest that anchors the building's foundation: the symbolically-charged channeling to the center of the goods, services and co-operative spirit that will enable the reciprocal relationship between ruler and ruled to thrive.

On the original central panel of each façade, the king is enthroned under a baldachin with his crown prince standing behind him. The royal pair receive a bowing official who announces the imminent start of events (*Fig. 1*). On Wing A, to the rear of the central panel, files of Persian nobles in alternating court robes and riding costume chatter amongst themselves – until those towards the front (nearest the royal group) become still in anticipation of the ceremonial soon to commence. On Wing B, approaching the king and crown prince from the other side, twenty-three groups of gift-bearing delegations representing peoples of the empire wait in precise formation. A Persian usher takes the leader of each group by the hand in preparation for the moment when they are led before the king. We are meant to imagine the groups moving up the stairs and into the audience hall where a ceremony of gift-giving probably occurred in actuality. At the same time, the sculptural representation of gift-giving is a metaphor for the empire itself. The original central panels were moved, probably in the reign of Artaxerxes III (359–338), to a prominent columned room within the Treasury¹⁴ and replaced by the panels displaying heraldic flanks of honour guards that remain *in situ*

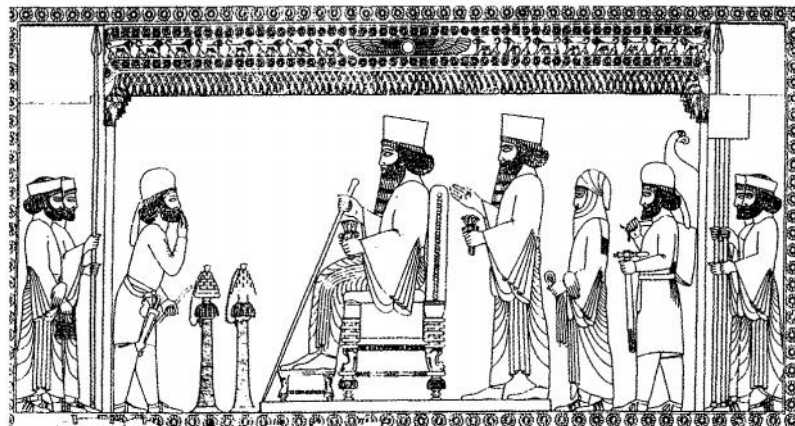


Fig. 1. Apadana Original Central Panel, east façade (adapted from Tilia 1972, Fig. 3).

today. But even for a visitor arriving after this change had been made, the meaning of the processional representation will have been obvious.

The apparel of the Yauna

All the figures in Group XII (Fig. 2 a–b) wear a smooth high boot that extends halfway up the calf and is tipped up slightly at the toe. The figures in Group VI (Lydians) wear the same type of footwear. This is a version of the Greek traveling boot, perhaps a fitting acknowledgement that any Yauna in Persepolis has made a long journey. Our Athenian would recognize the object (despite its somewhat un-Athenian form) but might be startled at the clothing with which it is associated. For, instead of other traveling gear, such as the broad-brimmed hat (*petasos*) or traveling cloak (*chlamys*),¹⁵ the delegates wear long, elaborately draped robes. These garments are interesting in their own right.

All delegates wear a crinkly undergarment (*chiton*) with a generously-sized overgarment (*himation*) draped on top. The *himation* has a border indicated by incision and a tassel at each corner.¹⁶ In the classical period, Athenian men



Fig. 2a. Apadana Group XII – north façade (drawn by Y. Keshtkar).



Fig. 2b. Apadana Group XII – east façade (drawn by Y. Keshtkar).

went about the city wearing only a *himation* (Geddes 1987), usually revealing much of the upper body.¹⁷ The two-part garment of the Ionian delegation recalls the sartorial custom of the archaic period among mature elite males of East Greece and hellenized western Anatolia,¹⁸ but it would have evoked a bygone era and perhaps had a slightly exotic feel for our Athenian visitor. Would he see this sumptuous archaic dress as a simple reflection of the early date of the sculpture? Or might he consider it in more complex terms? Could it, for example, be read as a nostalgic anachronism invoking memories of former kings and tyrants, from Croesus to the Peisistratids, befriended by the Achaemenid court?

Herodotus wrote of such figures,¹⁹ and the Athenian's imagination was infused with the narratives of Herodotus. One of Herodotus' anecdotes (6.125) comes to mind. Alcmeon, son of Megacles the Athenian, was invited by Croesus, the fabulously wealthy king of Lydia, to take as much gold from his treasury as he could carry on his person. Alcmeon dressed in voluminous garments and put on his most capacious boots. Thus outfitted, he crammed every available crevice of his clothing and body with gold dust from Croesus' treasury. Croesus was so amused that he rewarded Alcmeon with even more gold. Our Athenian might himself laugh at the sight of these sculptured Yauna, who would look to *his* eyes as if they were dressed in burlesque fashion to take advantage of the *Persian* king just as Alcmeon took advantage of Croesus. Or he might remember another Herodotus story about the Persian Artaphernes (Darius' brother) challenging Histiaeus of Miletus about the Ionian revolt (6.1). Histiaeus pretends to know nothing. Artaphernes replies that it was Histiaeus himself who *made* the [metaphorical] shoe that the tyrant Aristagoras (the nominal leader) then put on. Recollection of this story would give our Athenian cause for unease as he made his way to visit the Persian king.

But there are other possibilities. The completely swathed bodies of the Yauna could be a piece of flagrant Persian ignorance about contemporary Greek fashion and custom and recall Herodotus' account of Artaphernes asking (in ignorance or with irony) who these Athenians *are* and where in the world they come from (5.73). Or the whole garment business might be seen as an insulting feminization of the Greek male – an assault on the public discourse of masculinity conveyed in the nude or semi-revealed bodies of the Athenian male. In classical Athens, a taste for Persian costume developed after the Persian Wars. Persianizing garments – in the form of a modified *chiton*-like dress or the sleeved jacket (*kandys*) – appear with pattern-woven or embroidered decoration. Elite Athenian women (and their children) were the consumers of this fashion. Only foreign males would otherwise wear such things (Miller 1997, 155–70, 249–50); an Athenian *male* would eschew

them as a sign of effeminacy and feminizing luxury. Similarly, the boots worn by the Yauna might recall Aristophanes' jokes about a type of Persianizing or Persian-import footwear (called *Persikai*) worn only by women and children (Miller 1997, 153–4, 250).

The gifts of the Yauna: overview

Seven of the eight Ionians bear gifts. (The leader, led by the hand, carries nothing, as is the case with the other twenty-two delegate groups.) They bring three types of gifts: (a) unadorned bowls and beakers, carried one in each hand by three figures, for a total of six vessels on each façade; (b) folded textiles carried by two figures on each façade: on the north, each of two men holds one set in each hand (for a total of four bundles), whereas on the east, each man carries only one bundle supported by both arms (for a total of two folded bundles); (c) rounded objects (balls of wool? or something else?) carried by two figures on each façade: each figure holds two (for a total of four objects on each façade). In this case differences between the two façades complicate interpretation of a gift that is particularly enigmatic and also particularly rich in interpretive potential for our Athenian.

The vessels: description

On the north façade, the first two gift-bearers each hold two Achaemenid beakers ornamented by an encircling ridge at the base of the rim. The third man holds two unadorned Achaemenid deep bowls with strongly everted rims (*Fig. 3*). On the east, the initial gift-bearer holds two Achaemenid beakers decorated with horizontal fluting. The second and third gift-bearers each carry two Achaemenid deep bowls, unadorned except for a single horizontal ridge at the shoulder and with the same strongly everted rim seen already on the north (*Fig. 4*).

It is generally assumed that all vessels shown as gifts on the Apadana were intended to represent metal versions of their respective forms. This idea

Fig. 3. Apadana Group XII, vessels on the north façade, detail of *Fig. 2a*.



Fig. 4. Apadana Group XII, vessels on the east façade, detail of *Fig. 2b*.

seems logical as a way of explaining why vessels that are quite plain (like the ones brought by Group XII) are suitable for a grand presentation ceremony. Sami characterizes Group XII as bringing 'vessels full of precious things' and the Babylonians of group V (carrying similar shapes) as bringing 'vessels full of gold and silver' (1955, 20 and 19 respectively). Dutz and Matheson (1998, 54) pick up on this, stating that Group XII bring 'cups of precious material, probably dyes'. Sami's suggestion can be neither refuted nor verified from the visual evidence. It reflects his concern to explain the vessels' relatively small size and plain forms in comparison with the amphorae of the Lydians (Group VI) or the truly outstanding amphora brought by the Armenians of Group III (Schmidt 1953, pls. 32 and 29, respectively). Unassuming as the vessels of Group XII may seem, it is interesting to note that six is the largest number of vessels brought by any delegate group.²⁰

Beakers

The roughly cylindrical Achaemenid beaker (often flaring slightly toward the lip and with a rounded base) develops out of earlier Near Eastern metal prototypes (Calmeyer 1993, 154).²¹ Very few actual metal examples have been retrieved (Miller 1993, 114–15), but a beautiful glass version was discovered in fragments in the Persepolis Treasury (Schmidt 1957, pl. 67, 10). It would have been considered as precious as a version in gold or silver, if we can believe Aristophanes' quip at *Acharnians* 74 (Goldstein 1980, 49 n. 13). A stone (alabaster?) beaker was unearthed in Sami's excavations on the citadel; it too would have had some cachet.²² At the other end of the spectrum, plain ceramic versions of coarse fabric were discovered below the citadel during restoration work.²³

Cylindrical Achaemenid beakers were adapted by classical Athenian potters working in black-gloss technique, which simulates the hard sheen of metal. But in the process the beaker acquired a flat base and a handle – becoming effectively a mug. Thus, although closely related to the Achaemenid beaker and often fluted like the eastern metal prototypes, it was really a different vessel (Miller 1993). Miller has discovered only one example of a true cylindrical beaker depicted in an Attic symposium scene.²⁴ This suggests very limited usage of the form in elite male domains.

Bowls

The broad open vessels with everted rims depict what archaeologists call Achaemenid deep bowls. They are a hallmark of the western Iranian repertoire during the Achaemenid empire (Dusinberre 1999 and 2003, 176–8). A plain bronze example of just such a vessel was excavated from the Persepolis Treasury (*Fig. 5*). A version in coarse clay but with well-controlled

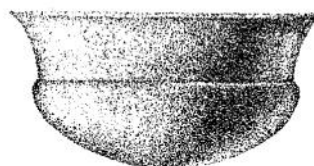


Fig. 5. Bronze bowl from Persepolis Treasury (adapted from Schmidt 1957, pl. 68, 1).

horizontal fluting has been reconstructed from fragments discovered below the Persepolis citadel.²⁵

The vessel form was also welcomed beyond the Iranian heartland. Elite Lydians appropriated it in the metallic (and probably glass) versions used in court circles. Lydians of lesser social status adopted it in ceramic versions, as is clear from the archaeological record at Sardis. These appropriations were part of an embrace of Achaemenid dining customs as well as an emulation of a particular vessel shape (Dusinberre 1999 and 2003, 172–95). We see something here of the ambiguity in Group XII between Ionians and Lydians (cf. n. 10), for these vessels seem more closely associated with Lydia than East Greece: although the deep bowl was used broadly in the empire, excavated examples are less prominent in East Greek contexts than in Lydian or Phrygian ones.²⁶

The situation in Athens is as interesting and dynamic as in Lydia, but in differing social ways. The deep bowl was already emulated enthusiastically in Athens – first in its original metallic manifestations – before the Persian invasions. By the post-invasion classical era, Athenian potters were imitating the shape in black-gloss ware and adapting it to local tastes in drinking cups, adding handles and pedestal feet to merge it with formal attributes of the kylix (Miller 1993, esp. 137–41) (Fig. 6). But Miller emphasizes that, while the initial emulations in metalware were an elite phenomenon, the Athenian black-gloss adaptations were probably ‘designed for the less wealthy’ (Miller 1993, 137; 1997, 253). Moreover she has found only one depiction of the deep bowl on an Athenian pot – a red-figure cup showing an *oriental* symposiast.²⁷ Given the huge numbers of preserved drinking vessels bearing depictions of symposia, we must infer that black-gloss adaptations of Achaemenid deep bowls were not common accoutrements of the Athenian male domain of dining.

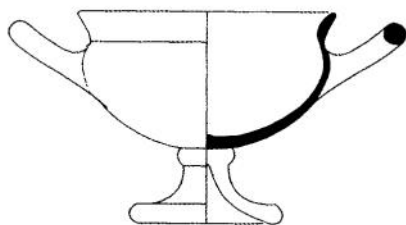


Fig. 6. Profile of Athenian black-gloss deep bowl with handles and foot, Athens Agora P 16535 (adapted from Miller 1993, pl. 31, 5).

A fragmentary terracotta plaque from the Locrian sanctuary depicts a female carrying a deep bowl in a cult procession (Prückner 1968, pl. 5, 3). Evidence is limited and we cannot make a quantitatively valid surmise. Nevertheless it is important to note that there is a close link between the Achaemenid deep bowl and the shallow bowl. These deep bowls (like the shallow bowls the Greeks call *phialai*, which also descend from eastern prototypes) were almost exclusively used by women in domestic or religious ritual contexts. Our Athenian will have known that the deep bowls brought by the Yauna belonged to a female world back home.

The vessels: analysis

Our visitor will also have understood that both the beakers and the bowls carried by Group XII were Persianizing forms (cf. Miller 1993, 139–40). He might know too that the bowls and beakers had been adopted and adapted by Athenian potters and in this sense could be considered Greek. But he would surely be struck by other aspects of the symbolism of these offerings:

- (1) The vessels brought by the Yauna are the pure Achaemenid forms, *not* the Athenian adapted forms (handles and stems for bowls; mug handle and flat bottom for beakers) that had evolved by the classical age.
- (2) Despite the fame of Greek metalware and of pottery-making and decorating in the Greater Mediterranean, the gifts of the Yauna aggressively deny any allusion to the prestigious commodities that really declared Greekness. This is the case even if we accept the rather compelling thesis of Vickers (1985) that black- and red-figure painted vessels were a poor-man's metalware and largely an export medium.
- (3) The black-gloss ware that our Athenian knew as the medium for the vessel types shown on the Apadana was a product of relatively low status and cost: an odd type of gift for the collective Greeks to be giving to the Great King.
- (4) Black-gloss adaptations of Achaemenid deep bowls and beakers seem to be associated with humble contexts and with females and Orientals – not with the world of the Greek citizen male, let alone the elite of that world.

The vessels carried by the Yauna were surely meant to be made of prestige materials – precious metal or glass. They were not intended to depict the pottery versions of such forms documented in the imperial heartland and in western regions of the empire. Thus our Athenian's personal cultural associations with these forms are out of synch with the intentions of the monument.

I doubt that the vessels of Group XII (or of other delegations bringing open bowls and beakers) were meant as containers of valuable materials rather than intrinsically valuable items. The small, narrow-necked jars brought in

baskets by the Indians (Group XVIII) are more likely than an open vessel to be offered for the prestige substance held within.²⁸ Our Athenian might also observe that the Yauna are only one of ten groups bearing these same vessels. They are a bizarre choice to represent the hallmark Greek culture of any region, and all the more so because they cluster the Yauna with a very improbable set of peoples. In addition to the Yauna, deep bowls or cylindrical beakers are brought by six Iranian peoples: Group I (Medes), Group III (Armenians [north only]), Group IV (Aeians), VII (Arachosians), Group XIII (Parthians), and Group XV (Bactrians).²⁹ Of these, four also bring a splendid camel and would be notably exotic to a Greek eye (IV, VII, XIII, and XV). Additionally the bowls or beakers are brought by three peoples west of the Iranian heartland: Group V (Babylonians), Group VI (Lydians), and Group VIII (Cilicians).³⁰

Calmeyer (1993, 160) has proposed that Achaemenid bowls appear in the hands of so many delegate-groups because the aim is to depict *not* the uniqueness of discrete peoples but the existence of an *international type* in vessel taxonomy that was universalized through the social mechanisms of imperial power. He thus posits a political message, a material proclamation of the cultural homogeneity produced by empire. Schmidt had previously suggested that the lack of variety in vessel forms (not least in Group XII) was merely the result of an efficient sculptural production process divorced from programmatic considerations (Schmidt 1957, 95). This seems unlikely to me, especially given the care sometimes taken to represent idiosyncratic gifts (including vessels), and I prefer Calmeyer's idea. Schmidt did hazard an alternative thesis, 'that the approximate forms (and the weights?) of the tribute vessels were determined by decree' (Schmidt 1957, 95), but considered this less plausible than the notion that it was all based on expediency. To me, his alternative hypothesis is more compelling. It foreshadows more recent claims that the weights of precious metal vessels in the Achaemenid empire are a sign that they were standardized commodities for storage and exchange at registered value (Gunter and Root 1998, with bibliography) and is consistent with Calmeyer's political interpretation.

The plethora of precious metal vessels brought by the Yauna would thus have been intended as a sign of registered wealth – even though the decorative detailing of the particular vessels is not especially remarkable. The imperial standardization of the vessels packages the collective Greek entity of the Yauna together with selected Iranian and western peoples, and the gift of vessels expresses the absorption of Greekness within the homogenized imperial family rather than its cultural distinctiveness. If people were on hand to explain the intended meaning to visitors from foreign lands, our Athenian might have found this packaging either comforting (even glamorous) or

distasteful (even frightening). If he was left totally to his own associations, he would have found the vessel iconography baffling at best, at worst insulting of manhood and Greekness.

Folded textiles

We come next to the folded lengths of cloth brought on each façade by two members of Group XII (Fig. 7). The tassels at the corners of the cloth brought by the second cloth-carrier on the east façade indicate that this gift consists of folded sets of the same two-part garment the Yauna themselves are wearing in the reliefs:³¹ the first cloth-carrier is bringing the crinkly undergarment, while the second brings the *himation* with tasseled corners. Presumably, on the much-degraded north façade each cloth-carrier brings the complete two-part set, since each carries two packets of textiles. As we saw, the Yauna resemble several Iranian groups in bringing Achaemenid vessels to the King, and something similar applies here, since five Iranian peoples (all wearing the three-piece Iranian riding costume) also bring their distinctive garment as a gift³² (Fig. 8).

The Yauna thus stand out as *one of only two non-Iranian delegations* to bring their own clothing to the king. The other non-Iranian group is the Arabian delegation (Group XX), which brings a single *himation*-like length of cloth with tasseled corner that mimicks what they themselves wear (Schmidt

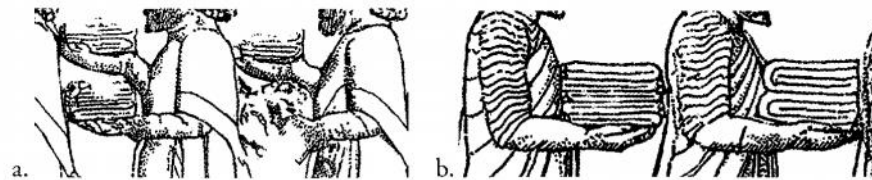


Fig. 7. Apadana Group XII textiles (a) north façade (b) east façade (details of Fig. 2a).



Fig. 8. Apadana Group I (Medes), schematic drawing of east façade (adapted from Dutz and Matheson 1998, 59).

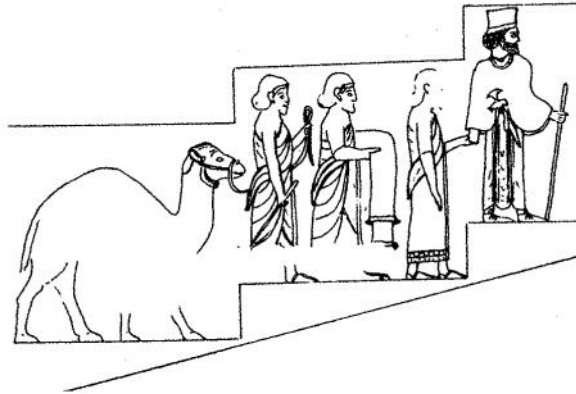


Fig. 9. Apadana Group XX (Arabians), schematic drawing of east façade (adapted from Dutz and Matheson 1998, 49).

1953, 77 and pl. 76) (Fig. 9). The Arabians were privileged participants in the Achaemenid world who were excused payment of annual tribute because of their special status as guiders in the desert (Anderson 2002). We may infer that to offer one's own clothing (and thus be linked with the family of Iranian peoples) was meant to suggest honour. The fabric of the Yauna costumes would have been emblematic of the high-status textile industries famously operated by Ionians of East Greece (as well as producers of dyes and fabrics from e.g. Tyre or Sardis),³³ and the reliefs may have received painted ornamentation to suggest the richly dyed and embroidered textiles associated with centers to the west.

Our Athenian might associate the gifting of garments at the Persian court with a particularly ominous story told by Herodotus (9.107 ff.). A beautiful and elaborately decorated multi-colored robe was woven for Xerxes by his wife Amestris. The king's mistress, Artaynte, demanded it as a way of forcing him to demonstrate that he esteemed her more highly than his wife. Despite his efforts to shift her interest to other opulent gifts, Xerxes was in the end forced to hand over the robe. Thus are gifted robes portrayed as pawns in the backstabbing female harem intrigues of the Persian court – hardly the context with which our manly Athenian would like to associate himself.

The actual *visual portrayal* of garment presentation provokes other unsettling associations, and the fact that the formula is unique among textile-bearers on the Apadana raises questions about the intentions of the Apadana designers at this point.

The Ionians hold the cloth in neat bundles laid along their forearms, which bend at a rigid ninety-degree angle from upper arms that are pressed tight to the sides of their torsos. The folded format does not encourage consideration of the visual quality of the fabric but speaks primarily to the height and heft of the stack. The only detailing evident in the carving itself

is the set of tassels already noted. The passive bodily containment of each carrying figure emphasizes the restrained momentum toward the destination of the commodity rather than the grandeur of the gift as such.

By contrast, all other groups bringing any loom-made garment or textile bear the items forward in a display mode that directly engages the viewer with the surface and form of the commodity. All these other representations also assert the agency of the carrier through the swelling modeling of the outstretched hand that bulges out from behind the cloth as it pushes it toward the gaze of the viewer. A good example is Group V (Babylonians). (Fig. 10) Here the textile gift is a lavishly finished thing – heavy with a deep sumptuous fringe of tassels carried to show off its heft and its decorative features (Schmidt 1953, pl. 31; Walser 1966, pl. 43). On the north, the textile appears plain because it presents the non-fringed end; but it is held in the same display manner. The view on the east façade makes it reminiscent of the royal canopies on the original central panels of the Apadana (see Fig. 1 above). Such display presentations go back ultimately to Near Eastern prototypes in the early days of city-state emergence, such as the Uruk Vase from the protoliterate period, on which the priest-king and a royal servant ostentatiously carry forward an elaborately woven gift for Inanna.³⁴ Millennia later, on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, fringed textiles are brought as tribute hanging from a rod³⁵ (Fig. 11).

Why did the Apadana designers decide to portray *only* the Yauna delegation carrying their garments in this unique way, one which is simply not part of the Greater Mesopotamian repertoire for textile display by males (or females) in ritual or political ceremonial? A fragmentary tomb painting at Harta in NW Lydia (Fig. 12) provides an analogy, but it was surely inspired by Achaemenid prototypes such as the Apadana reliefs rather than the reverse.³⁶ There is an Egyptian feel to the iconography – an almost hieroglyphic compactness of composition³⁷ – and one recalls nome-offering scenes in which the bounty of the provinces is held along the forearms of nome-personifications.³⁸ One might speculate that an Egyptian way of portraying offering-bearers entered the representational tradition of western Anatolia during the earlier first millennium (before the arrival of Cyrus) and that it is this tradition that was the proximate source of the unique format used for the Yauna gift-bearers. But no monument survives to illustrate such a speculation.

One thing is clear, however. The inescapable Greek associations of folded cloth discreetly carried in a tidy bundle are with women: women carefully putting away the fruits of domestic labor in chests or carrying them in representations on rather humble votive objects. Emblematic of this is the famous Locrian plaque depicting a woman stowing folded cloth in a large chest,³⁹ (Fig. 13) but the scene type exists also on white ground lekythoi⁴⁰ (used in

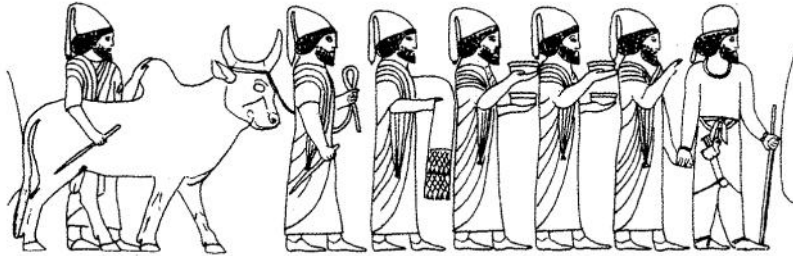


Fig. 10. Apadana Group V (Babylonians), schematic drawing of east façade (adapted from Dutz and Matheson 1998, 58).



Fig. 11. Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, Nimrud, detail of textiles, British Museum ANF 118 885 (adapted from Börker-Klähn 1982, cat.no.152).



Fig. 12. Bearer of folded textiles, Harta tomb painting (adapted from Özgen and Öztürk 1996, Fig. 65).



Fig. 13. Detail of Locrian plaque showing woman with folded textile, Taranto Museo Nazionale I.G.8332 (adapted from Prückner 1968, pl. 4, 4).

family funeral rites) and will have been familiar to our Athenian visitor. Read by an Athenian male, therefore, the behaviour of the cloth-carriers of Group XII will have seemed utterly female. The spectacle of clothing as commodity rather than display-object may also have evoked in our visitor the wider association of women with wool-working: this was a matter both of domestic fact (Barber 1994; Reeder 1995, 200–2) and literary and visual representation in media thoroughly accessible to the male observer.⁴¹ Female manipulation of wool was metaphorically entangled with aspects of female sexuality, the mysteries of procreation, fate, and the weakness of the female compared to the masculine warrior.⁴² All of this would be disquieting, and the reflection that male textile-workers did also exist would be small consolation, since they were low-status professional craftsmen and, among other things, produced elaborate woven products for elite women's garments (Miller 1997, 155–7).⁴³ The visual association of females and wool-working was clear and relentless. The work was necessary and was valued; but it was also a trope for gendered disparagement when linked in any way to a male. A passage in Athenaeus quoted and discussed by Briant (2002, 284 and 282–6) sums up the effeminacy of Oriental kings by describing Sardanapalus 'who lived with his concubines dressed as a woman and spinning wool in their company' – an image which encapsulates the inevitable and disdainful reaction to association of the male with spinning-and-weaving.

Is there any way of finding more manly overtones for this gift of the Yauna? If we ignore the tassels (which prove that the *intended* meaning of the cloth was a garment), the cloth might conceivably be interpreted by our Athenian as the folded linen sails of a warship, brought as a form of weapon-gift to the Great King. Aristophanes quipped that the *peplos* of Athena carried in the procession of the Great Panathenaia was large enough to hoist as a sail on a ship, so the visitor could even (with some irony?) connect a popular commentary on a procession of state ritual and cult at home with the performance of kingship at Persepolis. But there is no Greek iconographical tradition of men carrying sails like this, and Aristophanes is simply making a joke about the colossal scale of Athena Parthenos (about eight times life-size). In any case, the *sail* of an Athenian warship was not emblematic of its military importance. Trireme sails were used for travel in open water (De Graeve 1981, 180–1) but stowed away during battle, when it was the oars and metal-sheathed ram that mattered. The truth is that the look of the Yauna carrying their modest packets like girls patiently carrying bundles to-and-fro at home would overwhelm any conceivable reminiscences triggered by the Apadana of war stories involving mighty triremes with full sails to the wind returning home victorious on the open sea.

Strabo (15.3.18) describes elite Persian youths being taught to make

weapons, weave linen cloth, and fashion hunting nets as well as to pursue the manly arts of war and sport. This commentary (written well after the life of our Athenian visitor) reinforces the classical testimony that insists upon the oddities of Persian manly custom, not least their bizarre effeminacy. By contrast, the accepted norms of western elite manly virtue insist upon a deep divide between work appropriate to the female and work admissible for an Athenian man of substance. In this Greek context training in humble work such as weaving is absurd.

Rounded objects: the problem

The rounded objects carried by two Ionians at the end of the group on each façade are the most puzzling gifts. It is not clear what category of thing they represent, and the fact that they look quite different on the two façades adds interpretive complexities (Fig. 14 a, b).

On the north façade, they look perfectly spherical and have no carved detailing. On the east, they are slightly more conical than spherical, appear somewhat flattened at the bottom and are embellished (by careful carving) with irregular wavy horizontal ridges. It is possible that wavy horizontal lines were added in paint on the north, with no vestige surviving. But there are no visible incised guidelines to prove this. The differences in shape remain in any case. We thus have two options: (1) the balls on the north were meant to look the way they look now – possibly once embellished with added paint and possibly not; or (2) they are in an unfinished state, blocked out as spheres awaiting further shaping and detailing to make them match what we see in fully realized form on the east façade.

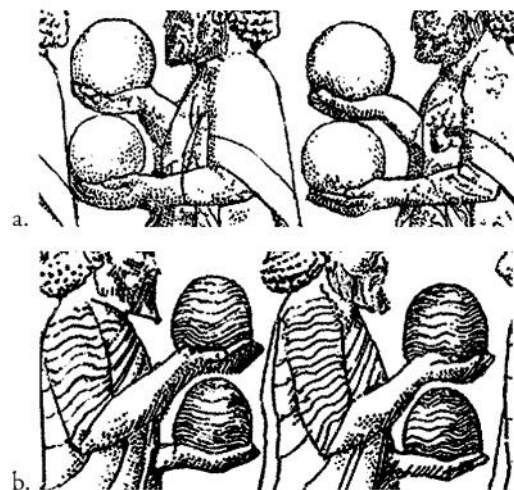


Fig. 14 a, b. Apadana Group XII, rounded objects (a) north façade (b) east façade (details of Fig. 2a, b).

The first option acknowledges that the objects on north and east may not have been intended to depict the same category of thing. This is possible: there are several instances in which the gifts of identical gift-bearers on north and east differ for certain (see n. 32 and below). Moreover, the figures of Group XII on the north façade look in other respects finely finished in terms of their carving (e.g. Dutz and Matheson 1998, 52, far left; *pace* Koch 2001, 18–19): this supports the view that all of Group XII (north) looks now the way it was intended to look with the possible exception of added decorative coloration. The second option forces us to look to the east façade to understand what the north façade was intended to portray and to dismiss the look of the north as immaterial. This requires the rounded objects to be the sole exception in an otherwise highly finished section. But the perfectly spherical objects on the north do not resemble roughly blocked out passages of relief meant to presage the objects of the east. Rather, they look finely finished in their own terms.

Scholarship has universally assumed that the intent was to depict the same category of thing on both façades. This is the case even when the occasional commentator has noted the physical differences between north and east. The rounded objects are almost always described as balls of wool.⁴⁴ Sporadic cautions or queries tend to be ignored,⁴⁵ and the range of interpretive possibilities has been severely limited by the universal practice of assuming that the smooth spherical shapes of the north façade are identical in functional definition with the conical and horizontally wavy-ridged examples on the east. There are two questions to consider: what object did the Apadana designers intend to represent? and what would be the classical Athenian associations of the object in question? I shall consider a series of possible answers, noting as appropriate the different ways in which these work for the north and the east façade renderings.

Rounded objects: balls of wool?

The near-universal view of the renderings on both north and east is that they are balls of wool. This is understandable. It represents a compromise interpretation, one that works remotely to moderately well for the two distinct looks of the objects – whether we imagine that those on the north were fully finished or not. It is the easy way out.

Representations of wool-working implements in Near Eastern regions occasionally indicate the look of wool wrapped around a distaff. It may appear as a ball-shaped form or as a more elongated form articulated with horizontal bands.⁴⁶ Representations of thread wound around a spindle tend to show the thread clearly in a horizontal or slightly diagonal patterning.⁴⁷ Representations of balls of wool in isolation (attached neither to distaff nor

to spindle) are extremely rare (or non-existent) in the art of pre-hellenistic Greater Mesopotamia (see below). Within that iconographical tradition, then, the Apadana gifts (seen as isolated balls of wool) stand out as most distinctive.

The rarity of representations of balls of wool not affixed to spinning implements in pre-hellenistic Near Eastern art is especially notable because the significance of wool as a coveted product is clear from the texts. Dyed wool (presumably in balls) appears in Assyrian lists of tribute and booty as a prized commodity,⁴⁸ and the vividness of richly dyed unwoven wool in the Assyrian imperial imagination is shown by a simile in the royal annals: 'I dyed the mountains with their blood like red wool.'⁴⁹ The importance of wool as a valuable agricultural product emerges early and persists in the Achaemenid empire.⁵⁰ There are also erotic and magical associations.⁵¹ Wool and wool-working thus has many resonances that might have fed the imagination of the Apadana designers. Yet a representational tradition for the ceremonial bringing of wool is lacking.

Quasi-spherical items depicted in the tribute procession of the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III from Nimrud might *conceivably* be balls of wool or in some cases balls of spun flax (Fig. 15). On face D2 one figure holds a smooth spherical item cupped in the palm of each hand in an inelegant forecast of the Apadana formula. But in other respects the formal relationship seems weak.⁵² Furthermore, the accompanying epigraphs do not support the idea of balls of wool. The captions make reference to raw metals (silver, gold, copper, lead), vessels and garments (Yamada 2000, 257). Woven fringed textiles are depicted, draped across carrying poles, but no mention is made of

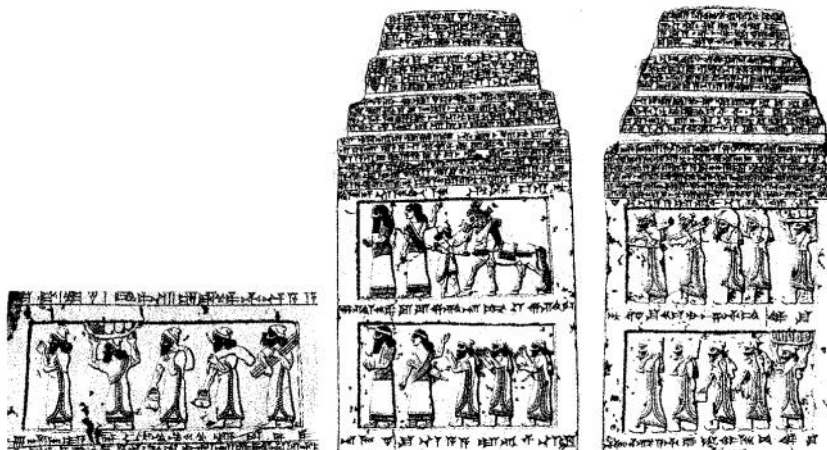


Fig. 15. Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, Nimrud, rounded objects, British Museum ANE 118 885 (adapted from Börker-Klähn 1982, cat. no.152).

wool or flax as raw materials. So, all things considered, the Black Obelisk is probably not a Mesopotamian prototype for representation of balls of wool on the Apadana. The specifically *striated* rounded items on the Black Obelisk resemble stacked anklets from the royal tombs of Nimrud (Bogdanus 2005, pl. 23) and this, combined with the references to precious metals in the epigraphs, prompts me to interpret *all* the rounded items as clumsy representations of jewelry (e.g. anklets) and lumps of un-worked metals.

At present I know of only one unequivocal example in pre-hellenistic Near Eastern art of the depiction of large spherical balls formed of long strands of a spun or twisted textile or fibre substance. This is the rendering of balls of twine for net-making on a hunt relief from Ashurbanipal's Northwest Palace at Nineveh⁵³ (Fig. 16). Here, the twine is wound into a ball in a realistic manner. The orientation of the strand switches direction repeatedly, in a criss-crossing method that enables the ever-enlarging ball to maintain its spherical shape. As noted earlier, Strabo remarks at 15.3.18 that elite Persian youth were instructed in the fashioning of hunters' nets. If Strabo's information reflects an accurate tradition of ethnographic knowledge reaching back from Augustan Rome to Achaemenid times, it suggests the possibility that the Apadana designers were imagining the rounded objects as balls of *twine* for netting. (The twine would be wound crisscross on the north into spheres that originally bore painted detailing, but loosely and horizontally into more conical shapes on the east.) Is such a gift plausible here? The raw materials for the netting of the seaman might have been thought an appropriate gift from the Yauna. Or the objects could be balls (north) or coils (east) of rope for sail rigging. Bearing in mind Strabo's report that the Achaemenids considered the making of nets and other implements for war and the hunt an honorable and noble act, gifts from the Yauna in the form of the materials for such projects is rather an appealing option.

In sum, the intention on the Apadana may have been to show balls of washed, carded, and sumptuously dyed wool.⁵⁴ This would accord well with references in the Assyrian annals to dyed wool as a prestige item. It would fit with the fame of western reaches of the empire in the arts of luxury dyes and textiles. The interpretation works moderately well in relation to both façades, and creates an obvious thematic link with the gift of woven garments. On the other hand, the idea of balls of twine or rope for net-making or sail-lines also works moderately well with the look both of the north and the east. In this case, the intended allusion would be to Greek maritime skill.

What would our Athenian visitor make of any of this? Depictions of balls of wool are much more common in Greek than Near Eastern art. From the archaic period onwards the Attic vase painting tradition is replete with images of mortal women working wool – including many examples in which

balls of wool are prominent. A famous black figure lekythos by the Amasis Painter shows women weighing out ovoid balls of wool. A particularly interesting fifth-century example is a white lekythos decorated by the Pan or Brygos Painter (c. 470). It portrays a woman stuffing a pillow case with large ovoid balls of wool mounded in a wool basket (*kalathos*) at her feet. The *kalos* inscription ('the young girl is beautiful') suggests to some that the representation is of a prostitute; but opinion is divided, with others insisting that the scene illustrates the domestic virtue of a good Athenian female.⁵⁵ This controversy recurs in relation to many other relevant scenes on painted pottery. Some convey mixed messages. Others seem unequivocally to display prostitutes working wool. Still others use the imagery of wool-working in ways that commingle work, courtship, and play in an intriguing layering of innuendo. The innuendo is inevitably bound up with the female and the balances of virtue and danger to the male lurking in her being and (by extension) in the tools of her work.⁵⁶ But the crucial point is that Athenian women of all stripes had a hand in wool working. The very ambiguities suggest that, however we view the evidence, our Athenian will have taken no comfort in identifying with the Yauna on the Apadana meekly carrying wool to the Persian king.

As for balls of twine or rope for sail rigging: to an elite Athenian of the classical age, the idea of being linked by association with the humble craft of net-making or the equally humble role of the sailor would be distasteful. Our man would have no visual tradition of artistic representation to aid in his reactions to the Apadana imagery if he read it as twine for net-making or rope for rigging. But perhaps worse, the visualizations he *could* draw upon would be those of voyeuristic exposure to the underbelly of life at the dockyards of the Piraeus or some similar distanced relationship to the world of sailors and mercenaries.

Rounded objects: ostrich eggs or cakes?

An exquisite seal used on the Persepolis Fortification tablets (PFS 535*) shows a banquet scene in which a seated figure reverently holds an ostrich egg (Garrison and Root, forthcoming) (Fig. 17). Another seal in the same archive (PFS 263) shows a combat in which the hero tackles an ostrich, with a large egg in the field between them (Garrison and Root 2001, cat. no. 289) (Fig. 18). Perhaps we are to understand that the hero has thrown the egg at the ostrich as if it were a slinging or hurling stone (see below). Ostrich eggs were certainly coveted throughout the ancient Greater Mediterranean, both as a banqueting delicacy and an item to be decorated as a *tour de force* in fragile luxury craft-production (Garrison and Root 2001, 407), and the notion that such things might appear as gifts on the Apadana is well within the realm

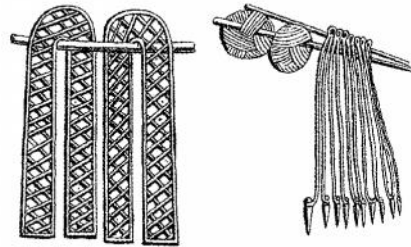


Fig. 16. Balls of twine from hunt relief of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (after Rawlinson 1875, pl. CXXIV, 4).



Fig. 17. Composite drawing of PFS 535* (Garrison and Root, forthcoming).



Fig. 18. Composite drawing of PFS 263 (Garrison and Root 2001, cat. no. 289).

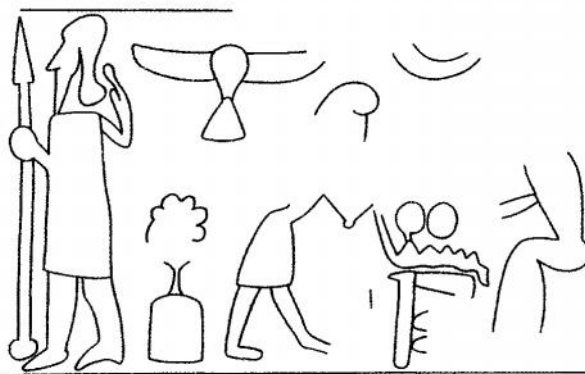


Fig. 19. Composite drawing of PFS 1360 (Garrison and Root, forthcoming).

of the plausible. Still, the identification is not particularly convincing: on neither façade are the rounded objects sufficiently like what we see so clearly on the elegant PFS 535* to be really satisfactory.

Substantial spherical or rounded cakes are an important element of the banquets rendered on several seals of the Fortification corpus (e.g. PFS 1360, Garrison and Root forthcoming) (*Fig. 19*). These scenes have ritual and ceremonial overtones. Given the symbolic associations and uses of such cakes in a variety of cultural contexts (see below), it is a viable thesis that large beautiful cakes served as special gifts to the Persian king⁵⁷ and might appear on the Apadana.

Even in contemporary Iran fine leavened holiday-breads sweetened with honey are often large round or rounded objects, sometimes decorated on the outside (Wulff 1966, 295). An Elamite precursor is seen in the six large round cakes depicted alongside a fish on a well-known Neo-Elamite relief from Susa depicting a seated spinner before a food-laden table (*Muscarella 1992, 200–1*) (*Fig. 20*). On the other side of the banquet table, across from the spinner and her servant, are vestiges of a larger-scale figure dressed in a garment with fleecy layers – a divinity or possibly a deceased ruler who is the recipient of the offering of fish and cakes overseen by the spinning female. This entire Neo-Elamite scene probably has a funerary ritual significance that connects spinning (and fate) with a symbolic banquet,⁵⁸ and it completes a circle in the pre-Achaemenid Near Eastern visual tradition

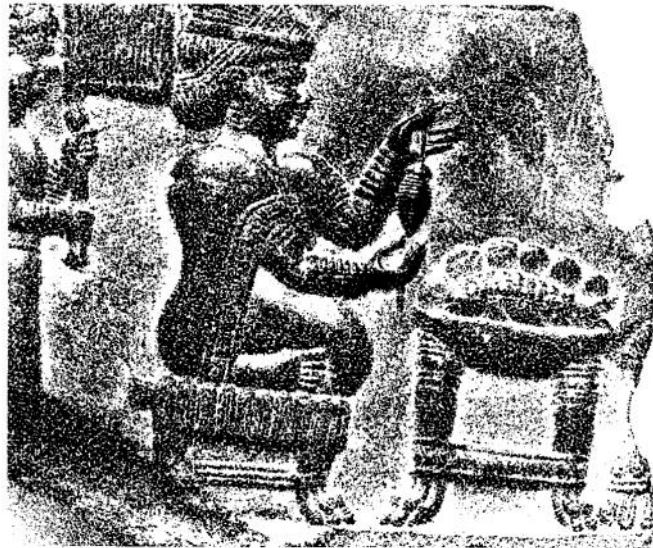


Fig. 20. Spinner relief from Susa, Musée du Louvre Sb 2834 (adapted from Muscarella 1992, 200, no. 141).

by linking the symbolic agencies of wool-working, the mythological and mystical associations of the female worker, and rituals incorporating feasting protocols for a deity or (quasi-divine or deceased?) ruler. The monument is particularly relevant because it was excavated at Susa and comes from the era of pre-Achaemenid Persian cultural assimilation within the Elamite orbit. That it is unique in the archaeological record of Elam at that period is an accident: the artifact surely stands for a larger repertoire of which we have only this vestige.⁵⁹ Elam was critical in the formulation of Achaemenid visualizations of dynastic ritual and empire, and the spinner relief from Susa deserves consideration in any attempt to explain the intention of the Apadana designers.

From our Athenian visitor's point of view eggs or cakes would, again, evoke the female domain. This works at the mundane level of cooking or barnyard-work, but also (perhaps) in more abstract ways. The visitor might, for example, think of the sexually suggestive cakes associated with some female cults⁶⁰ or of the turns of phrase from which contemporary scholars have deduced an Athenian ideology in which the role of the female body in procreation is metaphorically figured as that of an oven in bread-making (duBois 1988) or of the actual large leavened breads used in Athenian marriage rituals, where they are replete with fertility symbolism of powerful universality (Vérilhac and Vial 1998, 348–57). None of this would be remotely comforting in the context of collective portrayal of Greek males on the walls of Persepolis (cf. Root forthcoming). Nor, perhaps, would another more venturesome possibility. Athenians (we are told) believed that the Acropolis was guarded by a great snake, to which every month they served a honey cake. On a famous occasion the snake's failure to eat the cake presaged temporary Persian occupation of the Acropolis (Herodotus 8.41). Athens recovered from that blow and went on to create an empire; but the visitor to Persepolis might see on the Apadana the spectacle of Greeks (theoretically including the Athenians) offering cakes to the Persian King⁶¹ – an ironic inversion of their feeding of their guardian snake.

Rounded objects: votive or cultic orbs?

At Parthian Old Nisa, a series of votive balls were excavated from the Round Hall. They are hollow spheres roughly in keeping with the scale of the balls on the Apadana. Some bear the widely-spaced impressions of coins on the exterior and some have seeds inside to produce a rattling sound (Invernizzi 2001, 307–8 and fig. 9). The archaeological context of the find (replete with sculptures of dynastic implication) suggests a royal or ancestor cult, and these balls evidently performed some ritual functions in relation to the structure and the performances enacted therein. Hollow spheres have obvious potential

symbolic aspects as surrogates for the womb. Balls containing seeds press this even further towards allusion to (dynastic) fertility. Similarly, one might see impressions of royal coins (especially portrait coins) into the surface of hollow balls as a ritual related to dynastic succession. With luck we shall eventually learn more about these artifacts and identify similar ones in other Iranian contexts – perhaps even discovering a link to Achaemenid imperial times.⁶² In the meantime it is interesting to contemplate the idea that the Yauna of the Achaemenid imperial imagination might specifically and exclusively have been singled out to present such an object on the Apadana.

Would the objects have meant anything to our Athenian visitor in such terms? Prückner saw the balls offered by young girls on many Locrian plaques as constructed cult objects and cautiously accepted their identification as astrological orbs evoking the cosmos or alluding to Orphic mysteries (Prückner 1968, 48). There is plenty of evidence for shaped objects suggestive of human sexual physiology in Athenian votive contexts relating to fertility. Conceivably, our Athenian might see the spherical objects on the Apadana as some such items – balls with seeds for a Demeter and Persephone cult, perhaps. Alternatively one might think of the primordial omphalos of Delphian Apollo, originally envisaged as a cult object in the form of a conical stone or a large egg standing on end (Roscalla 1998, 34). That would avoid gender problems but surely be equally discordant with the Apadana setting.

Rounded objects: balls for games?

The Persian court was known for the intense training of its youth in horsemanship. This raises the question of early forms of polo using wooden or weighted leather balls. Some of the wooden polo (Gitchō) balls from a thirteenth-century AD tomb in Japan look about the same diameter as the objects carried by the Yauna.⁶³ But we have no evidence for this early form of polo in the Achaemenid era. (The traces are in Sasanian Iran and Han China.) But, even if we did have such evidence, why should the Yauna, of all peoples, be depicted bringing a gift that would be more appropriate to hard-riding East Iranians?

The same problem confronts us with the possibility that the Yauna's gift are spherical footballs for a team sport of kickball. This sport is documented as early as the Warring States period in China, contemporary with Achaemenid times. Moreover non-functional spherical 'presentation' footballs (made of leather covered in silk) are known from Japan (Bower and Mackenzie 2004b, figs. 23.4 and 23.6), and such things could plainly have been fitting gifts for a king of Persia. Again, however, evidence is lacking in the Persian context: we can prove neither that the Great King knew of the game nor that he thought the Yauna did.

In classical Athens competitive ball sports for males were not the normal athletic activity they were in Sparta (Poliakoff 1987, 107).⁶⁴ Two Athenian relief panels discovered built into the Themistoclean wall originally adorned separate statue bases of the archaic age (c. 510–500). They depict youths playing ball sports and may be taken to represent a larger oeuvre on that theme popular in the sixth century (Boardman 1978, figs. 241 and 242). But by the classical era, the visual record we are able to assess is insistent upon the connection of girls and women with ball-playing. Toy balls become a persistent and pervasive element in the Athenian iconography of girlhood and in the practice of female cult as illuminated in the archaeological record. Child brides offered their toy balls to Artemis on the first day of the marriage ritual (Cantarella 1987, 45; Brulé 2003, 129, 172). The commingling of balls of wool, implements of wool-working (such as the *kalathos*), and playing with toy balls (or fruits as surrogates) is a particularly relevant phenomenon in the Athenian representational repertoire (Fig. 21). Ferrari sees the scenes of wool-working in vase painting as really commenting upon the relation of women's work and women's play in the domestic sphere. Very often the woman who sits there working with balls of wool is in the company of others who 'play a game of knucklebones or smell flowers and toss balls'.⁶⁵ These combined ball-playing and wool-working scenes often evoke courtship (Ferrari 2002, 31 and figs. 65–7). A number of the Locrian cult relief plaques depict young females offering balls (as noted above) (Fig. 22). Some are smooth spheres; some are decorated with a band and parallel zigzag patterns; and still others are spheres covered with an all-over pattern of raised dots.⁶⁶ This last group links visually with some depictions of balls of wool on Athenian vases (e.g., Ferrari 2002, figs. 26 and 56). Indeed, any of the balls shown on these plaques might plausibly be meant to indicate wool *or* toy balls. It is also plausible that



Fig. 21. Attic red-figure kylix interior, showing woman juggling balls (or spherical fruits) with her kalathos nearby, Musée du Louvre C 331 (adapted from Ferrari 2002, fig. 22).



Fig. 22. Locrian plaque showing female holding large 'ball', listed as Scaglione Collection 13 (adapted from Prückner 1968, pl. 28, 5).

there were lively double entendres operating on these votive plaques – just as there were on many of the vase paintings of wool-working that include females playing with their toy balls.

Rounded objects: sling shots and hurling stones

The rounded objects on the north façade could conceivably represent stones for slinging or hurling. Either of these identifications would necessitate considering that a change was made for the depiction on the east. This, as we have already discussed, is perfectly plausible.⁶⁷

Slingers were an important feature of the military might of the Achaemenid empire, as were hurlers.⁶⁸ Foot soldiers followed Assyrian precedent in using rounded stones for sling-shot,⁶⁹ and the war ships of the Persian fleets sometimes acted essentially as launching platforms for slingers. Two seals used on the Persepolis Fortification tablets bear images incorporating spherical projectiles associated with slings (Fig. 23 a, b). PFS 57* shows a hero holding a sling, with a spherical shot tied to his wrist (Garrison and Root 2001, cat. no. 239). PFS 10 shows a figure who has just hurled a spherical projectile with his sling (Garrison and Root 2001, cat. no. 251). This evidence reinforces the classical testimonia about the importance of slingers in the Achaemenid military. It also suggests a relatively high status for the weapon, for the slingers in these images appear in scenes of heroic encounter and the seals bearing the motifs belong to men of high administrative standing. If the designers of the Apadana depicted Yauna bearing a gift of shot for slinging, their intent would arguably have been positive.

As with vessel types, it is generally assumed that delegates depicted on the Apadana bring examples of their own *distinctive* weaponry. But such evidence as we have tells against this view in the present case. Xenophon

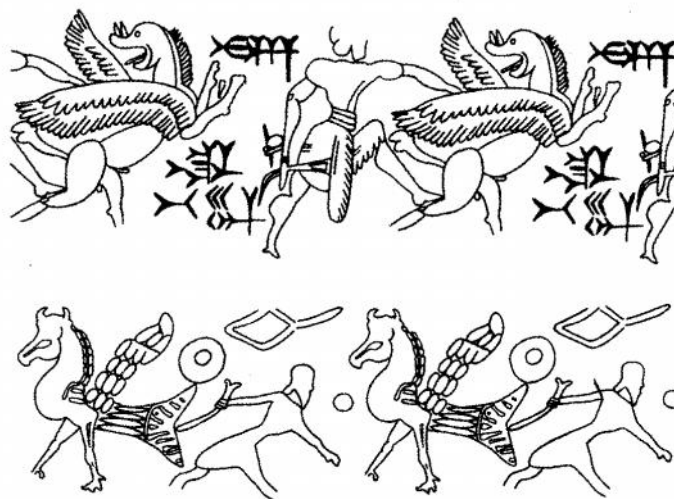


Fig. 23 a, b. Composite drawings of PFS 57* and PFS 10 (Garrison and Root, 2001, cat. nos. 239 and 251).

(*Anabasis* 3.3.17), writing at the turn to the fourth century, describes Persian sling-stones as substantial (large enough to fill the hand) and contrasts them unfavourably with the much smaller and longer-range shot used by Rhodians. The Apadana objects certainly fill the hand, and could not possibly represent the sort of small lead shot known archaeologically from about 400 BC and associated by some with the Rhodian type noted by Xenophon.⁷⁰ Xenophon's portrayal of slingers as an established part of the king's armed forces in *each satrapy of the empire* (*Oeconomicus* 4. 5–6) even invites the possibility that the Yauna were specifically depicted on the north bearing shot for slings in order to acknowledge their thorough embrace within the imperial family: we may recall Calmeyer's thought-provoking hypothesis on the symbolic value of showing generic Achaemenid beakers and bowls brought by group XII (see above).

Although Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* 7.4.15) states that Cyrus considered slings a servile weapon, the Persepolis glyptic evidence suggests that Xenophon is here transferring an elite Athenian viewpoint disdainful of slingers to his *Perse imaginaire*. In other words: our Athenian is not likely to have appreciated any link with slingers in positive terms. The Rhodian specialism was eccentric, and the textual tradition otherwise connects Greek use of the weapon with rustic Cretans or with Sicilians. Pritchett's collection of material (1991, 4–32) does suggest that slinging was a more significant, if unheroic, feature of Greek warfare than the textual sources imply. But clearly among Greeks it enjoyed the lowest status of all military services

(Pritchett 1991, 53). The best that can be said of sling-shot from the elite Athenian vantage point is that (unlike balls of wool) it did at least belong to the domain of warfare, not the domain of women. Faint praise.

Hurling-stones were a major feature of defensive warfare throughout the ancient world. Stone-hurlers play a prominent role in depictions of citadel defence on the late Achaemenid-period Nereid Monument in Lycia (Childs 1978, 77). Actual artillery balls of Achaemenid date are documented by a notable find from Paphos, where they are associated with the military events of the 490s. They are typically spherical with one flattened side, although some appear fully rounded and some seem to have two flattened sides. The large ones in the cache, measuring between 18 and 22 cm in diameter and weighing up to 20 kg, were surely used for hurling with both hands or from catapults.⁷¹ Such stones would, of course, be a challenge to carry one-handed with the effortless grace we see on the Apadana. But this is where art takes over: the way in which things (and even kings) are carried on the Apadana is meant to signify an ideal state of willing cooperation, not to be realistic (Root 1979, 131–61).

The defensive character of hurling stones must be considered the defining element in any attempt to determine the intentions of the Apadana designers in putting them into the hands of the Yauna. The period during which the north façade was designed and carved was right around the turn from the sixth to the fifth century. This invites the hypothesis that the imagery on that façade was produced in direct historical response to the sack of Miletus in 499. In other words, the Yauna may be depicted bringing hurling stones to the Persian king as a symbol of capitulation.

As for the Athenian response, a passage in Euripides *Phoinissai* suggests pervasive familiarity with stone-hurling as a defensive technique:

How am I to tell how Kapaneus went mad?
For grasping the rungs of the long ladder
He ascended and boasted thus
That not even the sacred fire of Zeus would
Hold him back from seizing the city and its lofty towers.
Calling out these things *while being stoned*,
He crept up having drawn his body under his shield
Passing up the smooth rungs of the ladder.

(1,172–78 [emphasis mine]: Childs 1978, 70–1)

But more specifically relevant to possible Athenian associations in Persepolis may be the fact that the defenders of the Athenian Acropolis in 480 are said to have rolled boulders down on the Achaemenid forces (Herodotus 8.50 ff.). The motif of Athenian heroes defending the Acropolis was portrayed on the exterior of the shield of the colossal statue of Athena Parthenos in a scene

in which the attacking Amazons functioned as an allegorical substitute for the Persians. In Harrison's reconstruction of one copy of this monument a mighty stone-hurler appears in a prominent position at the top of the shield, with a pile of stones at his feet (Harrison 1981, 313 and ill. 6)⁷² (Fig. 24). The stone-hurling defender of Athens can claim a mythological association with Athena herself, since the stone is Athena's weapon and it is she who first brought stones for the building of the Acropolis (Harrison 1981, 310),⁷³ but the saga of a stone-hurling last-ditch defence of the Acropolis may also be echoed in the rows of column drums dramatically displayed in the fabric of the post-destruction Themistoclean north wall of the Acropolis, looking down upon the agora. While it is generally understood that these and other architectural remnants of archaic structures on the Acropolis were embedded in the wall as a war memorial (Rhodes 1995, 32–3 and fig. 19), Wrede (1996) has specifically suggested that these particular column drums had a special memorial charge because they had literally been used as hurling stones in the defensive action. This hypothesis may be impossible to prove, but it is nonetheless intriguing. It suggests the possibility of a strong emotive reminder to every classical Athenian male (on a daily basis) *not only* of the Persian sack of his city, *but also* of the hurling of stones as a mythologized act of heroism.

Looking at the matter in these terms our visitor's response to the Apadana objects might be positive. But there are possible grounds for ambivalence as well. According to Plutarch (*Pericles* 20–1), the sculptor Pheidias portrayed



Fig. 24. Hypothetical reconstruction of the original shield of Athena Parthenos, upper portion (adapted from Harrison 1981, ill. 4).

himself as the stone-hurler on Athena's shield. If this tradition had any currency in the classical century, our Athenian would surely be disdainful of the association with a low-status stone carver.⁷⁴ Added to this issue of class, the issue of gender emerges again. A *topos* in Greek narratives of city sieges assigns the throwing of things from rooftops to females.⁷⁵ Stone-hurling is an act of defensive desperation when the enemy is at the gate. In the context of historical Miletus, hurling stones would conjure up ignominious memories best forgotten for our Athenian. In the context of historical Athens, hurling stones might inspire some nostalgic pride in our man on his home turf as he cast a patriotic gaze up along the north wall of the Acropolis. But a vision experienced in Persepolis of the collective Yauna carrying hurling stones to the Persian king as their weapon of record would surely be shameful.

Rounded objects: beehives?

Walser, while interpreting the rounded objects on the north and east façades as balls of wool, acknowledged that those on the east (with slightly flattened bottoms and wavy horizontal striations) look basket-like (Walser 1966, 88). If we take seriously (as we must) the shape of the east façade renderings, with their ridging and more conical shape, the beehive becomes a viable alternative interpretation, not least because the items on the north could have been intended to be finished in the same way.⁷⁶ (The scale is rather small for beehives, just as it is exaggerated for balls of wool, but realistic scale is subverted frequently on the Apadana reliefs in exchange for iconic effect.) More precisely, the east façade objects could represent either the type of beehive made by bonding coils of grass and overlaying them with mud (so-called 'skep' beehives, dome-shaped objects resembling an inverted basket) or the type formed by multiple overlapping stacks of clay rings. Skeps are a traditional and very ancient type of beehive, still in use today wherever beekeeping and basketry traditions coincide, while an old tradition of beehive manufacture from three stacked clay rings was still practiced in Iran in the 1960s (Wulff 1966, 153). In dimensions these actual clay beehives conform nicely to what we see on the Apadana, as does an actual ceramic hive from the Athenian Agora, dated to about 400 (Crane 1999, fig. 26).⁷⁷

An intriguing comparandum comes from a fragment of an ivory panel of furniture inlay excavated at Susa. It depicts a male figure holding a dome-shaped object with regular horizontal striations on the open palm of his outstretched hand⁷⁸ (Fig. 25). This figure is surely part of a longer processional scene, which might have echoed the effect of the Apadana reliefs in condensed form. Pierre Amiet has described the object as something unidentifiable (functionally) that is in the form of a hive ('ruche') and notes that one can imagine a connection to the 'pelotes de laine (?) présentées par



Fig. 25. Ivory plaque (detail) from Susa, Tehran, National Museum of Iran, 6810 (adapted from Amiet 1972, Fig. 32).

les porteurs à Persépolis'. The relationship with the objects on the east façade is indeed clear, but the conclusion I draw is that the item on the Susa ivory lends credence to interpretation of the Apadana item as a beehive.

The Susa ivory is carved in a hybrid Egyptianizing style, probably reflecting Levantine manufacture, and the facial characteristics of the figure holding the beehive suggest he is Egyptian or Ethiopian,⁷⁹ so it casts no direct light on the next question, which is why the Apadana designers might have shown Yauna offering beehives.

A gift of beehives would bring Group XII (east) into line with other delegations that offer some type of living animal – if the beehives are assumed to be inhabited.⁸⁰ There is ample historical and ethnographic documentation for the transport of live beehives, so the idea of bringing them from the far west is not fantastic. If we focus on the bees themselves (rather than their honey), we might recall the suggestion that the Persians identified *themselves* with bees (Roscalla 1998, 97–101) and wonder whether the gifted beehives were supposed to be a symbolic affirmation by the Yauna of the value of Persianness. A different possibility is that the Apadana designers were aware of the association of bees with Ephesus or with the Delphic Oracle and thought a beehive an appropriate symbol of the Yauna on that ground.⁸¹ Alternatively we may choose to focus not so much on the bees as on their productive capacity. Honey was a coveted commodity in antiquity, but it was cultivated widely and there is no obvious reason why it should specifically be associated with the Yauna. Bee-keeping and honey-production had venerable associations with the state in Egypt (Brewer 2002, 453; Foster 2002, 303 n. 4),⁸² there is evidence for bee-keeping as a royal activity in pre-Achaemenid Mesopotamia (Frame 1995), and honey seems to have figured in Achaemenid court ritual and ceremonial dining practice.⁸³ In the light of this (and of the more general ideological representation of the Achaemenid king as

horticulturalist: Briant 2003) it is possible that the beehive was regarded by the Apadana designers as a gift that resonated honorably with the privilege of service to court life and the royal persona.

How would our Athenian visitor view the representation of male Yauna as the stewards of beehives brought to the king of Persia? Since bees had supposedly guided colonists from Athens to Ionia (Cook 1895, 8) there might seem to be something appropriate about this. But various other thoughts present themselves.

(1) Dutiful wives were equated with bees. The *locus classicus* is Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* of the early fourth century (Pomeroy 1994), but the association goes back at least to the archaic age of Semonides,⁸⁴ and Plutarch reiterated the theme centuries later (Pomeroy 1999). The sinister version of the metaphor is exemplified in Hesiod where parasitical women are like bees inside the hive filling their bellies through the work of others and perpetrating a curse upon men (Pomeroy 1995, 2–4 and *passim*). There is also a link between women and bees in religious contexts. Thesmophoric women in the sequestered practices of the cult of Demeter were called bees (Goff 2004, 127; Cook 1895, 14), Apollo's oracular agency at Delphi was activated by priestesses called 'bees' (*melissae*) (Cook 1895, 6); and the *melissae* of Ephesus were famous. Priestesses as bees were mediators of all sorts of chthonic mysteries in Greek ritual. These female associations, whether with good or bad women, would again be discordant for our Athenian spectator.

(2) Herodotus (7.61) says that the Greeks called the Persians drones (κηφῆνες) and Aeschylus describes Xerxes' army as a 'stinging swarm' (*Persians* 126 f.). Such passages are probably not (*pace* Roscalla 1998) evidence that Persians represented themselves as bees. Rather, they belong in the same sort of context as Aristophanes *Wasps* 1075–90, where elderly Athenians dress as wasps to symbolize the sting they once inflicted upon the barbarian at Marathon as punishment for the Persian destruction of their 'hives'. The result of their heroic 'sting' is that 'among the barbarians it is said even now that there is nothing more manly than an Attic wasp'. The metaphor, appropriate to the Persians because they were numerous and intent upon violence, is applicable to the other side as well. This might be a rather more attractive association for our visitor – though the Aristophanic geriatrics are hardly unambiguously admirable figures.⁸⁵

(3) Honey is quite widely linked with the bestowal of wisdom and eloquence (Cook 1895, 3–8), and Greek tradition from at least the fifth century saw the phenomenon of ox-born bees, born when Leo approaches Taurus at the vernal equinox, as symbolic of the regenerative power of spring (Kitchell 1989). The ubiquitous Lion and Bull symplegma at Persepolis might actually help to draw the visitor's mind to that idea. In any event, these

quite positive associations could make beehives seem to be a gift appropriate (or appropriately flattering) to the Great King. Another possibly relevant story is that in which Herodotus recounts that bees occupied the severed head of Onesilus, prime instigator of the Cypriote contribution to the Ionian revolt (5.113). Because the bees filled his head with honeycomb, Onesilus was worshiped as a semi-divinity. But if our Athenian's thoughts turned from beehives to the bee-filled severed head of a Yauna who dared to resist the king, he might feel queasy about his own impending audience.

Conclusion

In the process of reading Group XII of the Apadana in Greek, I have worked along two tracks of investigation: one running through Achaemenid studies and the other through classical studies.

First, the Achaemenid side: Group XII has previously attracted only limited attention; none of it focused on the symbolic significance of their gifts in the larger metaphorical display on the Apadana. I have made some suggestions about what the Apadana designers may have had in mind and noted the tension between distinctiveness and collectivity in the representations of imperial subject-peoples. The important visual differences between the rendering of the rounded objects on the north and east façades preclude definitive determination of what kinds of things they are meant to depict, but it is better to accept this uncertainty than to opt for an unsatisfying but categorically stated interpretation.

Second, on the classical side I have offered an impressionistic and selective sample of associations potentially triggered by our Athenian's encounter with the vision of the Yauna in Persepolis. My sample derives from a free-associative exercise based on an imperfect, personal, and non-encyclopedic relationship to the world of our Athenian. That is, I have simply asked myself what things come to mind if I put myself in the position of the Athenian visitor looking at Group XII. From there I have followed ideas up to a certain point. More could be done – especially, I think, with the reading of the rounded objects and more particularly there in relation to bees and honey. But, impressionistic as it is, I believe that the exercise is a useful strategy in cross-cultural analysis between Greeks and Persians. It is, of course, an intrinsic feature of the exercise that some of the visitor's putative ideas may seem rather whimsical or tangential.

The project of considering the reading of Persepolis in Greek has touched not only upon how our Athenian reader received its messages but also upon how the designers of the program may have targeted the iconography of Group XII in consideration of the Yauna's reception of it. Did the planners consciously anticipate Greek readings of the representation? If so, did they

aim to provoke positive, empire-affirming responses among the Yauna – or did they aim to insult and psychologically destabilize them? It is my opinion that the intent of the Achaemenid program was to incorporate. Veiled threat and coercion may be here, but so are notions of collective ceremonial affirmation. And the intended effect was a resolution of these competing energies into a freighted but positivist whole.

Although some of the Greek readings envisage a validating reception by our Athenian, most thrust him into a feminizing context that seems destined to alienate him. The vocabulary, syntax, and meta-narrative of garments, gifts, and demeanour almost always lead the Greek reader into a zone where his misogynistic, patriarchal upbringing will make him shudder. If so, this suggests a great gulf of cross-cultural miscommunication. Some of the problem has to do with changing times between the designing of the Apadana and our visitor's admission to the Persepolis citadel in the long classical century. Other aspects of the problem may reside in truly different constructions of what cultural value and dignity of experience are all about. There is a circularity of argument here. For the construction of a notion of Athenianness was partly based on antithesis and antagonism to a Persian norm of cultural value and process. If our Athenian visitor perceived his manliness insulted by the representational codes of Achaemenid art and by the ceremonial codes of performance at the court, did this provoke a cultural backlash that lent force to anti-Persian notions of the feminized barbarian?

Hall (1989, 74) emphasizes the importance of the impact of actual experience on the inexorable enhancement of such stereotyping in Athenian tragedy. As our Athenian walks along the Apadana façade, are we witnessing one such piece of actual experience? Are we face to face with one type of repeated cross-cultural encounter that encouraged the formulation and reformulation of the gendered tropes of demeaning stereotype about Persian imperial society that increasingly charged the classical testimony? Did familiarity, tragically infused with oppositional notions of gendered representation, breed contempt?

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Notes

¹ See Root (forthcoming).

² I shall also introduce comparative material from Magna Graecia, but it is widely acknowledged that this reflects models from Attic visual culture: cf. Prückner 1968, 1, and Ridgway 1981, 154, no. 7, regarding the Locrian votive terracotta plaques, discussed several times below.

³ e.g. Cantarella 1987, 38; Loraux 1993, 16; Roisman 2005, 1.

⁴ e.g. Lewis 1997–8, 84; Foxhall and Salmon 1998; Osborne 2000, 40.

⁵ Root 1980, 1985 on various aspects of the accessibility of Persepolis; Hall 1989, 74, reaffirms the viability of this claim; likewise Tuplin 1996, 138 (with caution).

⁶ Raaflaub (2004, 201) reviews the evidence, previous analysis, and factors suggesting that ancient evidence for visitors at Persepolis may only be the tip of the iceberg.

⁷ The Achaemenid art known from Persepolis was not limited to that city. The Apadana scheme was apparently rendered in painted mural form as a temporary measure at Susa after the destruction of the palace, and a range of evidence – from portable arts to monumental vestiges – discloses echoes of the imagery far to the west. Extensive Athenian emulation and adaptation of Achaemenid Persian visual culture (Miller 1997) presupposes multiple modes of exposure to models.

⁸ On Persepolis as ceremonial site cf. Briant 2002. The densely metaphorical visual program was not a blueprint for a specific ceremony portrayed in literal terms (Root 1979 and 1990), but insistence upon a vision of a world of peoples convening at Persepolis is not accidental: there were certainly occasions when this is what happened. Greater Persepolis was an administrative site receiving travelers on imperial business from all over the world *and* a ceremonial capital (Garrison and Root 2001).

⁹ Brinkman 1989; Hall 1989, 77–8; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1980, 2001.

¹⁰ The issue is largely whether Lydia should be imagined as including the Yauna for the purpose of this particular metaphorical representation of imperial identity. Schmidt 1953, 88 was tentative, and Sami 1955, 20 considered the group to be Lydian. But by 1970 Schmidt had resolved his reservations thanks to correlation with the labeled tomb-façade figures (1970, 152–3) and this view now holds sway – although most commentators acknowledge ambiguities. Walser, for instance (1966, 86–8), emphasized the western aspect of Group XII but articulated the ambiguities between Group VI (almost universally identified as Lydians) and Group XII. Some commentators maintain that Group XII combines Ionians and Lydians (e.g. Dutz and Matheson 1998). Jacobs 1982, 83–4 unusually proposes an Indian identity for Group XII (see below). The functions of the various representational and textual listings of imperial peoples were fluid. In particular, the Yauna and Lydians (Sardians) were liable to coalesce or disaggregate according to rationales that are not always clear to us. The Yauna are not present at all on the base of the Egyptian statue of Darius excavated at Susa in 1972 (Roaf 1974; Koch 1993, 108–9); but on the tomb of Darius, a Yauna personification does appear (with a caption) and the figure is separate from the Lydian.

¹¹ This is a topic requiring fuller analysis elsewhere; but hints of its importance run through the present discussion. See also Root (in press and forthcoming).

¹² Relevant passages include 1.72 ff.; 5.96, 101; 6.20. On Xenophon's characterizations of this shifting ethos of identity and Greekness see Dillery 1998, esp. 27–31.

¹³ Gate of All Lands: Schmidt 1953, 65–8. Gate and Apadana: Root 1979, fig. 8. Decorations: Schmidt 1953, 70–90; Root 1979, 86–95 and fig. 10.

¹⁴ Tilia 1972, 127–8, esp. 205–8. Although opinion is not unanimous, this late dating seems increasingly sound to me.

¹⁵ Achaemenid texts sometimes differentiate *petasos*-wearing Ionians from the generic Ionian rubric (e.g. DNA: Kent 1953, 138). But representations of Ionians in the Achaemenid program eschew portrayal of this distinctive hat (cf. Rollinger 2006).

¹⁶ A beautiful photograph of one of the north façade Yauna shows the tassels clearly: Dutz and Matheson 1998, 52, far left. The *chiton* is shorter on the north façade than on the east. On both façades the *himation* is draped to pass under the figure's right arm and over his left shoulder – it is thus displayed in mirror image on the two façades. On the north, where the hem of the *himation* is in full view, we see an incised border, possibly indicating that it was marked out to receive paint here. (For evidence of painted garment decoration cf. Tilia 1978.)

¹⁷ cf. e.g. the marshals on the Parthenon frieze: Jenkins 1994, 97, fig. 90.

¹⁸ cf. e.g. the statue of Chares of Teichoussa, from Didyma (British Museum B 278): Ridgway 1977, 125–6, pl. 31.

¹⁹ 1.86–92, 153–8; 5.96; 7.7.

²⁰ cf. Calmeyer 1993, 152. Group XV (Bactrians [north]) also depicts six vessels divided between beakers and deep bowls (Schmidt 1953, pl. 41).

²¹ Schmidt 1953, 95 calls them cups. The north side beakers have convex sides, the east sides concave sides.

²² Sami 1955, ill. following 90.

²³ Tilia 1972, 246 and pl. CXXXIII, fig. 24.

²⁴ Miller 1993, 126–7; British Museum 95.10–27.

²⁵ Bronze: Schmidt 1957, pl. 68, 1. Clay: Tilia 1972, 246 and pl. CXXXIII, fig. 25.

²⁶ Dusinberre 1999, fig. 2. 101–2 lists published *excavated* Achaemenid bowls.

²⁷ Miller 1993, 114; Ashmolean Museum 1966.688.

²⁸ Schmidt 1953, 89 (pl. 18) describes '... pairs of jar-shaped objects (of gold or filled with gold dust?)', alluding to Herodotus 3.94. Schmidt also mentions contents in the case of the vessel brought by Group XXIII (Ethiopians). The vessel is rounded and the rounded lid is held carefully closed by the bearer. Schmidt 1953, 90 (pl. 49): '...vessel with lid, contents problematic'.

²⁹ Schmidt 1953, pls. 27, 29, 30, 33, 39, and 41. Group III (north) clearly included two vessels (probably deep bowls) in addition to the massive elaborate amphora brought both on north and east; unfortunately vandalism has obliterated anything but the rough contours of these two north façade vessels. On the east façade the great amphora is the only vessel gift.

³⁰ Schmidt 1953, pls. 31, 32, and 34.

³¹ This was noted by Walser 1966, 88, with pl. 60.

³² Iranian groups that bring the riding costume also bring a horse. They are: Group I (horse only on the north façade), III (with the garment only brought on the north, where the horse is absent; and horse only the east, where the garment is absent), IX, XI, and XVI (where horse and garment occur consistently together): Schmidt 1953, pls. 27, 29, 35, 37, and 42. Group IV (Arians) include a lion-skin with head attached among their gifts, but this is unlikely to be a garment (e.g. for use in cold weather), partly because the head is still attached, partly because an entirely similar gift is brought by Indians on the fragmentary stairway façade of Artaxerxes I (Tilia 1972, pl. CLX, figs. 78–9). The meaning of this gift is probably more symbolic, perhaps recalling ritual uses of lion skins with the heads attached worn by cult performers e.g. on Neo-Assyrian reliefs from Nineveh.

³³ cf. Walser 1966, 88. Jacobstahl 1938 deserves notice and should be read with the close associations between Sybaris and Miletus (e.g. Hdt. 6.20) in mind.

³⁴ Moortgat 1969, fig. 9 (pl. 20). I shall discuss this tradition further elsewhere.

³⁵ Börker-Klähn 1982, 190–1, cat. no. 152. See drawing at 152b and photo of section D4.

³⁶ Özgen and Öztürk 1996, 36–9 and 68. The original painting included an extended procession that with other possible links with the Apadana (e.g. a horse-drawn chariot and vestiges of numerous other human figures in a long file). The other finds include a ceramic Achaemenid deep bowl (Özgen and Öztürk 1996, fig. 67): in light of Dusinberre's work, this is a further indication of a tomb and assemblage reflecting the cultural impact of the Achaemenid empire. The radiocarbon date for Harta is 365 +/- 70, but stylistic criteria suggest an earlier date.

³⁷ Compare the way in which delegates carry their Achaemenid vessels, with hands held palm up as on an Egyptian offering relief (Root 1979, 146–7).

³⁸ Those commissioned for the Temple of Hibis are exemplary: Root 1979, pl. XXXVI.

³⁹ Prückner 1968 pl. 4,4: Taranto Museo Nazionale I. G. 8332. For other women carrying folded cloth as offerings on the Locrian plaques see Prückner 1968, pls. 5, 1 (Heidelberg), 2 (Paris) and fig. 6, where the woman carries the cloth (laid upon an animal-footed stand) balanced atop her head. None of the plaques seems to derive from a matrix dating before c. 470 and most of the reliefs were probably generated at dates stretching well into the second half of the 5th century. A few plaques are from grave and domestic contexts rather than from the sanctuary (Prückner 1968, 1), so they circulated outside the strictly female domain of the cults of Persephone, Demeter and Aphrodite..

⁴⁰ e.g. Oakley 2004, fig. 6 – a white lekythos near the Providence Painter dating c. 460 BC, currently in a German private collection.

⁴¹ Ferrari 2002 (vase paintings); Clairmont 1993, no. 1.176: Berlin, Pergamon Museum 737 (a famous grave-stele in Berlin emblematic of the monumental tradition); Furtwängler 1883–7, text accompanying pl. XIX; Pomeroy 1994, *passim* but, e.g., 58–65.

⁴² Near East: Hoffner 1966, Chapman 2004, 48–50. Greece: Weinberg and Weinberg 1956, Brulé 1987, D'Ambra 1993, 100–3, Ferrari 2002. Note also Goff's commentary (2004, 243–7) on the relationship between female communities at Locris, the poetry of Nossis and a gynocentric ritual subculture invoking a poetics of weaving in connection with dedications of woven garments.

⁴³ This was more telling than their work on a figural tapestry given to Athena quadrennially at the Great Panathenaia (Mansfield 1985, 2–7) – the one displayed ostentatiously, only partially folded, on the east of the Parthenon frieze (Jenkins 1994, pl. III). The professional male weaver might work on a highly prized ritual garment such as this one, but his status remained extremely low (see, e.g., Scheid and Svenbro 1996, 23).

⁴⁴ Jacobs 1982, 83–4 abnormally identifies Group XII as Indians, largely because he discerns balls of 'Indian wool' (i.e. cotton) – a better commodity than sheep's wool (Hdt. 3.106) and a much more worthy royal gift.

⁴⁵ Schmidt 1953, 88, was admirably circumspect in simply describing the physical look of the things. Walser 1966, 88 interpreted them as balls of wool, but articulated the unusual aspect of such a reading (cf. Koch 2001, 18). Dutz and Matheson 1998, 54 stand

out for noting a possible alternative interpretation (see below n. 76). Villing 2005, 236 still categorically calls them 'balls of wool' (on both façades) without qualification.

⁴⁶ Ball-shaped: Renda 1993, 178, B101, item on far left (Roman period Phrygian stele). Elongated and striated: Muscarella 1992, 200–1 (8th–7th century BC spinner relief from Susa).

⁴⁷ Renda 1993, 114, B101 – item to the right of the distaff.

⁴⁸ e.g. 'blue-dyed wool, purple-dyed wool': Pritchard 1950, 283.

⁴⁹ Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC): Pritchard 1950, 277.

⁵⁰ See e.g. Root 2005 on wool in late prehistoric semiotic systems, and Olmstead 1948, 80, 193, on transactions from Achaemenid Babylonia involving large quantities of wool.

⁵¹ Erotic: Westenholz 1992, 383. Magical: e.g. the Neo-Elamite spinner relief from Susa again (Muscarella 1992), and a Neo-Hittite grave-stele from Maras, Turkey: Bonatz 2001, 70–1.

⁵² Börker-Klähn 1982, no. 152: British Museum ANE 118885. The tray carried by a figure on face C2 holds loaf-shaped items with wavy horizontal striations parted in the middle. These could indicate either spun wool or flax fibres wound into loosely-shaped balls or prepared and dyed fibres already wrapped around distaffs, ready for twisting into thread. These items vaguely resemble what we would need to posit for the east façade renderings on the Apadana. The items carried directly above (face C1) are smooth and so more akin to the renderings on the Apadana north façade. On face A5 a figure carries a tray containing one striated form and three smooth ones. These may all be meant to indicate the same commodity, perhaps suggesting that the items shown on faces C1, C2 and A5 may also depict one and the same kind of thing. Those on face A5 are flattened on the top; those on C1 are mixed – with one clearly spherical and the others flattened at the top; and those on C2 (all striated) are manifestly spherical to oval. The differences may be due to clumsy workmanship where the carving meets the upper limit of the picture frame. The flattening on top rather than bottom is distinctive and different from what we see on the east façade of the Apadana.

⁵³ Rawlinson 1875, pl. CXXIV, fig. 4 (Northwest Palace, Room R), as on British Museum ANE 124893: Curtis and Reade 1995, 85.

⁵⁴ Similar-looking balls of hand-wound yarn may still be seen (Walser 1966, 88).

⁵⁵ Amasis Painter: Barber 1994, fig. 9.4: Metropolitan Museum of Art 31.11.10. Pan or Brygos Painter: Oakley 2004, 26 and fig. 5: Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, 1991.28; Reeder 1995, cat. no. 46. Oakley 2004, 26 denies that the woman in the second case is a prostitute, partly because white ground lekythoi were not sympotic vessels for the male domain but part of family funerary ritual paraphernalia. Lewis 2002, 98 agrees that the *kalos*-name in itself cannot prove that she is a prostitute. Others (Williams 1983, Reeder 1995, 211) assert the opposite viewpoint, Reeder seeing the bodily presentation of the woman as another sign of prostitute status. Ferrari 2002 reviews the question in a larger discussion of women and wool-working in Athenian culture.

⁵⁶ Herodotus (1.92) has Croesus kill his half-brother Pantaleon (whose mother was an Ionian) by having him dragged over a carding comb.

⁵⁷ e.g. Briant 2002, 291, on Xen. *Cyr.* 8.8.16 and cakes in court rituals of dining and imperial splendour.

⁵⁸ A harbinger of the New Testament loaves and fishes? Muscarella 1992 notes the

funerary possibilities (referring to a suggestion by Hrouda), but is sceptical. This interpretation forges a link with a Neo-Hittite funerary stele from Maras, where Bonatz 2001 finds allusions to necromancy.

⁵⁹ The Susa relief was made of bitumen compound (cf. Deschesne 1992) and was probably replicated through a molding process, with hand-worked details added to individualize the basic matrix-produced object.

⁶⁰ Demeter cults incorporated honey-and-sesame cakes shaped like genitalia along with other symbolic apparatus (Olender 1990; cf. Goff 2004, 128). Sexually-allusive confections may have included round cakes suggestive of the womb: see, e.g., the Locrian plaques on which girls bring spherical objects with raised dot pattern suggestive of pubic hair (e.g. Prückner 1968, pl. 6, 1; see also below).

⁶¹ More venturesome ideas (prompted by duBois 1988, 121 and 116): (a) Two Aristophanic jokes – the Great King on a pile of dung and the dung-cakes upon which Peisthetaerus' dung-beetle is fed – evoke a scatological interpretation of the round objects. (b) The story (Hdt. 8.137), in which a loaf baked for Perdiccas by the king's wife swelled to twice its proper size, portending the former's emergence as ruler of Macedonia, suggests bread as a symbol of empire.

⁶² Clay items like these (usually broken into uninteresting-looking bits) are notoriously neglected by field archaeologists and in categorization for storage and publication. A good example is the hollow balls used in late prehistoric accounting practices (discussed in Root 2005, with references to the studies by Denise Schmandt-Besserat).

⁶³ Bower and Mackenzie 2004a, fig. 22.7 – the larger pair of balls.

⁶⁴ Plato recommends competitive stone hurling and slinging as a form of military training (*Laus* 834; Pritchett 1991, 1, 55). But this very exhortation itself suggests that the practice was *not* a prominent feature of Athenian life for the well-bred man (see further below on sling shots and hurling stones).

⁶⁵ Lissarague 1995, 95; Ferrari 2002, 26, with, e.g., figs. 15, 22, 23, 29.

⁶⁶ Prückner 1968, pl. 28, 5 (Scaglione Collection 13); pls. 7, 1–2 (Amsterdam, Allard-Pierson Museum 1817 and Tübingen, Sammlung des Archäologischen Instituts der Universität 2033c); and pl. 6, 1 (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, no number cited).

⁶⁷ The Medes (Group I) on the east façade bring multiple vessels, multiple pieces of jewellery, and one sheathed *akinakes*, along with the three-part riding-costume (Schmidt 1953, pl. 27). The north has suffered damage to the upper parts of the gift-bearing figures, but it is certain that the gifts are radically different. On the north we have a horse (with its handler), three figures bearing the tripartite riding-costume, and one further figure. His gift is indeterminate because of damage, but only one of the three other gifts shown on the east can have been present. The change between north and east is dramatic no matter which two items are left out. Group III (Armenians) is also radically different as between north and east. On the north we see the tripartite riding-costume plus two vessels held by one figure; on the east, we see a horse and one elaborate amphora (Schmidt 1953, pl. 29).

⁶⁸ Briant 2002 discusses various texts describing cohorts of slingers among the Achaemenid forces: e.g. 341 (Xen. *Oec.* 4.5–6); 362 (Xen. *Cyr.* 6.2.36); 733 (Diod. 19.21.3); 231 (Strabo 15.3.18); 796 and 865. Pritchett's detailed account (1991, 1–67) gives this topic the attention it deserves in the history of military techniques.

⁶⁹ Hrouda 1965, pl. 60, 1: Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh, British Museum 124775;

Pritchett 1991, 33.

⁷⁰ Small lead sling-shot is known from 4th-century finds. Foss 1975 argues that this was a Greek invention adopted by Achaemenid armies around 400. Briant 2002, 1037–8 dissents.

⁷¹ See Maier and Karageorghis 1984, 198 f. A single ball of somewhat similar type has been found at Phocaea, possibly associated with a Persian attack *c.* 540 (Özyigit 1994; Briant 1994). On questions posed by these discoveries see Pimouguet-Pedarros 2000. Other caches of hurling stones demonstrate continuity from Achaemenid into hellenistic times (Marsden 1973, 222–8; Landels 1981; Pritchett 1991, 39–43).

⁷² Harrison reconstructs these stones on the basis of compositional arguments and the presence of stock-piled stones in earlier city-siege scenes (e.g. Troy on the François Vase) and on Achaemenid period city-siege scenes from Lycia. See Childs 1978, 77, fig. 29.1).

⁷³ This aspect of Athena relates to metaphorical valences of stones in Greek myth and literature particularly relevant to the ideology of Athenian autochthony as treated by duBois (1988, 86–109): notably, stones as the seed of the earth.

⁷⁴ On Pheidias' portrait cf. Harrison 1981, 309–10. I am far less sceptical than is Harrison of the idea that the late tale of embedded portraiture had a basis in 5th-century discourse on the monument.

⁷⁵ I thank Christopher Tuplin for this point.

⁷⁶ Not that we have to assume this: north and east façades may simply have depicted different objects. Dutz and Matheson 1998, 54 speak of the possibility that the objects depict 'honey-combs', probably a mistranslation of 'bee-hives'.

⁷⁷ This Athenian item differs only in the absence of ridging and in a very slight flattening at the crest of the dome shape.

⁷⁸ Amiet 1972, 321–2 and fig. 32: Tehran, National Museum of Iran, 6810.

⁷⁹ But ancient Egyptian beehives in representations such as that on the XXVI Dynasty Tomb Chapel of Pabasa seem to be tubular in form (Houlihan 1996, 189–91, fig. 130).

⁸⁰ Group I (east) (Medes) and Group XII (north *and* east) are the only groups not bringing a live animal – *unless* the rounded objects of Group XII are beehives. If *both* versions of Group XII actually included or were intended to include beehives, then the east façade Medes are a unique anomaly.

⁸¹ Ephesus: the bee appears on Ephesian coins (Cook 1895). The strength of this association is suggested by its use by the mint in hellenistic Susa, resulting from Ephesian deportations to Susa (Newell 1938, 115–23, 475–6). Delphi: see below.

⁸² Large storage-jars of honey form a Syrian gift to the pharaoh Sahure in the Fifth Dynasty but I know of no Egyptian depictions of live beehives being brought as tribute.

⁸³ e.g. Briant 2002, 243, 245, 286, 291; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1995.

⁸⁴ Haas 1981, 114–16; Sussman 1984, 84; Pomeroy 1995, 49–52.

⁸⁵ Aristophanes' comic thrust here must be read in light of the complexities of the Athenian re-invention of Marathon in the political environment of the 420s (Schreiner 2004, 32–3).

Margaret Cool Root

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